

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



April 29, 2004

REFUGEE COORDINATOR LETTER NUMBER 04-08

TO: COUNTY REFUGEE COORDINATORS

This letter provides counties with proposed allocations for the Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2004 Refugee Employment and Social Services (RESS) and Targeted Assistance (TA) Programs. The Proposed Notice of RESS Allocations to States for FFY 2004 funds and the Proposed Notice of FFY 2004 TA Formula Allocations for Services to Refugees in Local Areas of High Need were published in the *Federal Register* on March 19, 2004, and March 23, 2004, respectively. Copies of these Notices may be accessed on the Funding Opportunities page of the Refugee Programs Bureau's (RPB) web site at <http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/refugeeprogram/>.

Refugee Employment Social Services

The State's proposed RESS allocation for FFY 2004 is \$8,967,358, which is an increase of \$101,976 from last year's final allocation of \$8,865,382. This year the proposed state's allocation does NOT include set-aside funds. The State's allocation was determined by a formula based on the state's proportion of the national populations of refugees who had been in the United States (U.S.) three years or less as of October 1, 2003, and adjusted for estimated secondary migration.

Section IV of the Notice explains the basis for the estimates of the State's refugees, Amerasians, victims of a severe form of trafficking, entrants, and Havana parolee populations. The Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) data for these groups is in line with RPB data. Section IV also allows for states to adjust their population estimates to include asylees who were granted asylum and received RESS services between October 1, 2000, and September 30, 2003, as well as trafficking victims in the last year. The RPB e-mailed each of the counties requesting the data on all asylees and/or trafficking victims. The RPB believes that there may be significant numbers of persons in California who fall into these categories. The data was requested from the counties to be submitted to the RPB in Microsoft Excel format via e-mail by close of business on April 9, 2004. The RPB compiled all the counties' data and forwarded it to ORR on April 19, 2004, requesting that ORR adjust the state's population estimate.

Counties eligible to receive RESS funds for FFY 2004 are those with approximately 500 refugee arrivals during the most recent five-year period (FFY 1999 through 2003) as reflected on the enclosed Refugee Arrivals into California Counties Chart (see Enclosure C). Using this threshold, 12 counties are eligible for FFY 2004 RESS funds: Alameda, Contra Costa, Fresno, Los Angeles, Orange, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Stanislaus, and Yolo. However,

San Bernardino County has chosen to decline the RESS funding for FFY 2004, which leaves 11 remaining participating counties.

Please note that all or some of the allocation for San Diego County will be diverted to the Wilson/Fish Alternative Project. The exact amount of funding for the project has not yet been determined by ORR; however, the RPB has prepared the Proposed FFY 2004 RESS Allocation Spreadsheet (Enclosure A) based on the same amount (\$1,046,813) as was awarded last year to the Wilson/Fish Alternative Project. Should the amount, once determined, differ from last year's amount, allocations for other counties could be affected.

After setting aside a portion equal to 15 percent of the State's allocation for state administration, FFY 2004 RESS funds have been allocated to counties according to the conventional methodology which is based on the number of adult refugees receiving cash assistance in each eligible county who have resided in the U.S. for 60 months or less. Data used in the formula was obtained from the most recent Medi-Cal Eligibility Determination System (MEDS) Report dated March 25, 2004. Proposed allocations are shown in Column 4 on Enclosure A.

Counties are cautioned to use the proposed RESS allocations for planning purposes only. Final allocations are subject to federal funds availability and may be less than amounts indicated in the Proposed Notice. In addition, the final allocations will be based on the most recent MEDS data available at the time the Final Notice is published by ORR. Because MEDS data fluctuates, final county allocations may be significantly different than proposed allocations. The RPB anticipates that the Final Notice will be published by ORR in the next few months.

Targeted Assistance Formula Funding

California's total proposed TA Formula grant for FFY 2004 is \$5,188,517, representing a decrease of \$321,644 from last year's final allocation of \$5,510,161. The ORR determines the qualification of counties for targeted assistance funding once every three years; FFY 2004 represents the final year of the current three-year eligibility cycle. County allocations were determined by ORR based on the same formulas as in FFY 2002, updated to reflect arrivals during the five-year period from FFY 1999 through FFY 2003. Funds for state administration, at the 5 percent maximum allowable for this program, have been deducted from the county allocations determined by ORR. The enclosed spreadsheet (Enclosure B), shows each eligible county's proposed FFY 2004 TA Formula funding allocation.

Refugee Coordinator Letter No. 04-08
Page Three

Should you have questions regarding the proposed allocations or other information in this letter, please contact Ms. Betts Smith, Manager of the Performance and Systems Unit, by telephone at (916) 654-0495 or via e-mail at Betts.Smith@dss.ca.gov or Ms. Bunny Furlo, of her staff, at (916) 651-9770 or via e-mail at Bunny.Furlo@dss.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Original signed by
Thuan Nguyen
On April 29, 2004

THUAN NGUYEN, Chief
Refugee Programs Bureau

Enclosures